

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Previously Presented) A computer-implemented method, comprising:
 - displaying an interface screen to allow an applicant from a first company to electronically enter a nondisclosure agreement number corresponding to a non-disclosure agreement;
 - electronically determining whether the non-disclosure agreement number matches a non-disclosure agreement number in authorization data as part of a request for access from the applicant;
 - if not, sending a denial email to the applicant;
 - if so, electronically determining whether the first company has executed the non-disclosure agreement;
 - if so, electronically determining whether the applicant is associated with the first company;
 - if so, displaying an interface screen comprising terms of an authorized disclosure letter and further displaying a choice of accepting the terms or not;
 - electronically determining whether the applicant agrees to the terms;
 - if the applicant agrees to the terms, displaying an interface screen to allow the applicant to select one of a plurality of programs, each of which is associated with a corresponding list of company names authorized to exchange information with the applicant;
 - responsive to a selection by the applicant of one of the plurality of programs, displaying the corresponding list of company names; and
 - responsive to a selection by the applicant of a second company name from the list of company names, electronically providing the applicant with access to information belonging to the second company.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the information comprises confidential information belonging to the second company.
3. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
determining whether the first company is authorized to a program.
4. (Original) The method of claim 3, wherein the second company is authorized to the program.
5. (Original) The method of claim 3, wherein the information is associated with the program.
6. (Original) The method of claim 3, wherein the program comprises a joint-development program in which the first and second companies are participants.
7. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
determining whether an owner of a program gives approval for the first company to participate in the program.
8. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
determining whether a field representative gives approval for the first company to participate in a program.

9. (Currently Amended) An apparatus, comprising:

a controller; [[,]]

a display; [[,]] and

an input device;

the controller to display an interface screen on the display to allow an applicant from a first company to electronically enter into the input device a non-disclosure agreement number corresponding to a non-disclosure agreement;

the controller to electronically determine whether the non-disclosure agreement number matches a nondisclosure agreement number in authorization data as part of a request for access from the applicant;

if not, the controller to send a denial email to the applicant;

if so, the controller to electronically determine whether the first company has executed the non-disclosure agreement;

if so, the controller to electronically determine whether the applicant is associated with the first company;

if so, the controller to display an interface screen on the display comprising terms of an authorized disclosure letter and further to display a choice of accepting the terms or not;

the controller to electronically determine whether the applicant agrees to the terms;

if the applicant agrees to the terms, the controller to display an interface screen on the display to allow the applicant to electronically select one of a plurality of programs, each of which is associated with a corresponding list of company names authorized to exchange information with the applicant;

responsive to [[a]] an electronic selection by the applicant of one of the plurality of programs, the controller to display on the display the corresponding list of company names; and

responsive to [[a]] an electronic selection by the applicant of a second company name from the list of company names, the controller to provide the applicant via the display with access to information belonging to the second company.

10. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the authorization data comprises data regarding which company names companies are authorized to the program.

11-12. (Canceled)

13. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 9, wherein at least one of the plurality of programs ~~the pr-program~~ comprises a joint-development program in which the first and second companies are participants.

14. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the information comprises confidential information belonging to the second company.

15. (Currently Amended) A signal-bearing medium comprising instructions, wherein the instructions when read and executed by a processor comprise:

displaying an interface screen to allow an applicant from a first company to electronically enter a non-disclosure agreement number corresponding to a non-disclosure agreement;

electronically determining whether the non-disclosure agreement number matches a non-disclosure agreement number in authorization data as part of a request for access from the applicant;

if not, electronically sending a denial email to the applicant;

if so, electronically determining whether the first company has executed the non-disclosure agreement;

if so, electronically determining whether the applicant is associated with the first company;

if so, displaying an interface screen comprising terms of an authorized disclosure letter and further displaying a choice of accepting the terms or not;

electronically determining whether the applicant agrees to the terms;

if the applicant agrees to the terms, displaying an interface screen to allow the applicant to select one of a plurality of programs, each of which is associated with a corresponding list of company names authorized to exchange information with the applicant;

responsive to ~~[[a]]~~ an electronic selection by the applicant of one of a plurality of programs, displaying the corresponding list of company names; and

responsive to ~~[[a]]~~ an electronic selection by the applicant of a second company name from the list of company names, electronically providing the applicant with access to information belonging to the second company number.

16. (Previously Presented) The signal-bearing medium of claim 15, wherein the instructions further comprise:

providing an access control interface, wherein the access control interface allows the second company to control access to the information.

17. (Previously Presented) The signal-bearing medium of claim 15, wherein the instructions further comprise:

providing a request access interface, wherein the request access interface allows the applicant to request access to the information.

18. (Original) The signal-bearing medium of claim 15, wherein the instructions further comprise:

providing a display of companies who are participants in the program.

19. (Currently Amended) The signal-bearing medium of claim 15, wherein the instructions further comprise:

providing a display of companies authorized to exchange information with the applicant on a per-program basis [[bases]].

20. (Previously Presented) The signal-bearing medium of claim 15, wherein the instructions further comprise:

providing a display of contact information for the companies who are participants in the program.

21. (Original) The signal-bearing medium of claim 15, wherein the instructions further comprise:

managing the information.

22. (Original) The signal-bearing medium of claim 21, wherein managing the information further comprises at least one of adding, viewing, deleting, and updating the information.

23. (Previously Presented) A system server to facilitate exchange of confidential information about a plurality of controlled-communication programs, comprising:

a memory to store an authorized disclosure letter, authorization data, and a controller having a plurality of instructions;

a display;

an input device; and

a processor communicatively coupled to the memory and the display, the processor to execute selected ones of the instructions to:

display an interface screen on the display to allow an applicant from a first company to enter into the input device a non-disclosure agreement number corresponding to a non-disclosure agreement;

determine whether the non-disclosure agreement number matches a nondisclosure agreement number in authorization data as part of a request for access from an applicant;

if so, determine whether the first company has executed the non-disclosure agreement;

if so, determine whether the applicant is associated with the first company;

if so, display an interface screen on the display comprising terms of an authorized disclosure letter and further displaying a choice of accepting the terms or not;

determine whether the applicant agrees to the terms, using the input device;

if the applicant agrees to the terms, display an interface screen on the display to allow the applicant to select, using the input device, one of a plurality of controlled-communication programs, each of which is associated with a corresponding list of company names authorized to exchange information with the applicant;

responsive to a selection by the applicant, using the input device, of one of the plurality of programs, display the corresponding list of company names on the display; and

responsive to a selection by the applicant, using the input device, of a

second company name from the list of company names, provide the applicant with access to information belonging to the second company.